[Prof. Savithri Lakshmanan]

Government to issue necessary direction in the matter to the concerned authorities to carry out the expansion work at an early date. Nedumpasserry is the nearest palace which lies very close to Aluva which is known as the industrial town. FACT, TELC, TTC, Premier Tyres, Premier Cables, Travancore Rayons etc. are located very near to this area.

(iii) Need to ensure protection and conservation of the biological diversities in Mahandragiri, Orissa

SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI (Berhampur): Sir, the Mahendragiri Hill System is one of the oldest ecosystems in the country. The terrain is the unique epitome of genetic species, aboriginal tribes, archaeological and historical monument. In its aura of wildlife, the system represents the transitional zone between the Nothern Himalayan and Southern Peninsular System, providing an ideal niches for diverse genetic species. It is the natural habitat of varied wild animals like the elephant, leopard, tiger, hyena, wolf, bear, wild boar, spotted deer, antelope, etc. The elephant population is said to be around forty in number. Therefore, creation of an Elephant Senctuary or a Reserve may be considered.

Out of the nine top hills in the Eastern Ghats, three are in this system. They are Singaraj (1516 m.), Mahendragiri (1501 m.) and Devagiri (1382 M.) These three hills form a golden triangle, so far as the ecological wealth is concerned. Many of the plants and animals find their place in the IUCN RED Data Book as 'Threatened', 'Endangered', 'Vulnerable' and ' 'Rare' species. Hence, it becomes imperative to provide a Biosphere Reserve in Mahendragiri-Singaraj-Devagiri system, for their regeneration to pre-historic status.

The Mahendragiri Forest System has its own district fauna and flora. Sal, the pride of Orissa's vegetation, is fact getting depleted. Many of the species, which are endemic and also represent Himalayan and Peninsular elements, are on the wane.

13.39 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *In the Chair*]

In the fitness of things, a survey must be undertaken expeditiously on the flora and fauna of this Hill System in question.

I would, therefore, urge the Central Government to coordinate efforts with the State Government to ensure protection and conservation of the biological diversities in Mahendragiri's unique ecosystem, by declaring a Sanctuary/National Park/Elephant Reserve/Biosphere Reserve.

(iii) Need to re-open the Railway level Crossing near Pratapnagar Railway Station Baroda, Gujarat.

SHRIMATI DIPIKA H. TOPIWALA (Baroda): Sir, I wish to bring to your kind notice that the people residing in Railway colony near Pratapnagar Railway station and Danteshwar are facing a great difficulty due to closure of the Railway level crossing.

The population of Danteshwar area is about 30,000. In Danteshwar village any housing societies are located and the people of the village are increasing day by day. The population of the area depends on Chokhandi and Mandavi and Khanderao Markets for purchasing their daily needs. Many schools and hospitals are located in R.V. Desai Road. With the closure of the level crossing, they have to go via fly-over bridge which is very step grade.

The State Transport have to take a long distance to reach Mandavi resulting in more fuel consumption, time-consuming and expensive too.

In view of this, I urge upon the Central Government to take immediate steps to